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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 003066

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/ERA, EUR/UMB AND EUR/RUS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/19/2009

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SUBJECT: EU ON EXPANDED TRANSNISTRIA VISA BAN: NEED TO
PERSUADE MEMBER STATES

REF: A. STATE 150715

[B](#). BUCHAREST 1952

[C](#). TAPLIN-LITZENBERGER EMAILS

Classified By: USEU POLOFF LEE LITZENBERGER; REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

[1](#). (C) On July 19, USEU conveyed reftel non-paper to Council Secretariat Russia watcher Carl Hallergard, who is temporarily covering Moldova. He welcomed the non-paper, and said he would distribute it to member states at that day's COEST Working Group meeting. The Council Secretariat, he said, is convinced the EU needs to look at "options" such as the proposed expansion of the US-EU visa ban on Transnistrian officials. The Council Secretariat thinks that Russia will try to take advantage of US presidential elections and the change in EU Commission members this fall to spring a "Kozak II" unilateral settlement proposal for Moldova/Transnistria. Hallergard said that Russian Deputy FM Chizhov told EU Political Directors in Moscow on July 16 (septel) that Moscow considers the first Kozak proposal as the "starting point" for an eventual settlement.

Transnistrian actions will strengthen the case

[1](#)2. (C) Hallergard said one option for the EU to use to press the Transnistrians to engage in the ongoing OSCE-led settlement process is expansion of the visa ban. But, he cautioned, "It will take time. Member States do not share the Council Secretariat's sense of urgency." The issue of a possible expansion of the visa ban was discussed last week in Brussels and The Hague, he said; there was no consensus to ratchet up the travel ban. Any discussion of sanctions, he added, always raises legal and technical issues by members states who oppose sanctions on principle. Hallergard was nevertheless optimistic that the Council Secretariat would be able to persuade member states to support an expansion of the ban. First, late last week the Transnistrians closed down a Moldovan school in Transnistria, an incident the EU raised with Moscow last Friday. Next, he welcomed the US non-paper, which lays out other recent examples of Transnistrian obstructionism. Third, he welcomed the US proposal for US and EU missions in Chisinau to coordinate a recommendation, acknowledging that Finally, he considers it likely that the Transnistrians will continue to take steps that will only help bolster the case for expanding the sanctions.

Comment

[1](#)3. (C) The key next step is for EU Ambassadors in Chisinau to get the green light to coordinate an expanded list with us. Due to the August EU vacation period, this week's two COEST meetings will be the last opportunities for the working group to discuss Moldova until September. It is not clear, though, that there will be a consensus to task Embassies to explore expanding the list. At the next higher EU level, the Political and Security Committee is likely to meet on an ad-hoc basis in August, which will offer additional opportunities to push this issue in coming weeks. We will continue to work with the Council Secretariat to this end.

McKinley